

Grady
B.F.
Observations on
Sarracenia


Clinton, N.C., Feb. 27, 1873.

Prof. Asa Gray,
Cambridge, Mass.:

Sir. It had long been a question with me, what was the function of the tube and umbrella of the Trumpet (*Sarracenia*)? and a vain search in the few books at my command, induced me to make an investigation.

My discoveries so gratifying to me, may be equally so to you, if they are new.

1. Why were quantities of insects, bugs &c. in the bottoms of the tubes? To supply nourishment to a worm found in all the Trumpets — the same as swims in the water in the Pitcher. He is nearly transparent, except his viscera, and, no doubt, develops into a higher organization.
2. Why didn't these prisoners crawl out and escape? Because the tube is too smooth to be climbed even at an angle of 45° except the upper third which is so bearded as to prevent the ascent of large bugs.
3. What was the duty of the umbrella? To prevent its raining into the tube with two evil results: the dilution of the worm's food and the crushing down of the Trumpet, *vi et gravitate*. This contrivance is a semi-funnel admirably adapted to its use.
4. What attracted the insects &c.? A saccharine secretion on the nether surface of the umbrella!
5. Why did they fall in? Because this secretion intoxicated them! It took me a week to ascertain all these facts. I then dug up and brought home a dozen large Trumpets, and placed them in a room, and they pleased and instructed the household. The flies soon crowded the saccharine surface with the results of reeling and tumbling and vain efforts at recovery, until one or two Trumpets were full up to the brim, and the flies crawled out on one another. — As a fly trap, the Trumpet is much more destructive than the *Dioma Muscipula*.

We have many curiosities in our woods; but I have no time to study them. There is for instance a flower standing on a straight stem of 12 or 18 inches, shaped thus: . v are the stamens, o the pistil, and x a hinge; and when the pollen ripens, v falls down on o !

Very respectfully,

B. F. Grady, Jr.,

Prin. Male Academy.